
Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

Time and Date

10.00 am on Wednesday, 16th September, 2026

Place

Diamond Rooms 1 and 2 - Council House

Public Business

1. **Apologies and Substitutions**

2. **Declarations of Interest**

3. **Minutes** (Pages 3 - 8)

- a. To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 26th August 2026.
- b. Matters arising.

4. **Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Review Letter 2025-26** (Pages 9 - 24)

Briefing Note of the Service Recovery Manager

Councillor Duggins has been invited to attend the meeting for this item.

5. **Customer Communication and Service Standards** (Pages 25 - 30)

Briefing Note of the Scrutiny Co-ordinator

6. **Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee Work Programme 2025/2026** (Pages 31 - 38)

7. **Outstanding Issues**

There are no outstanding issues.

8. **Any Other Items of Public Business**

Any other items of public business which the Chair decides to take as a matter of urgency because of the special circumstances involved.

Private Business

Nil

Julie Newman, Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities, Council House,
Coventry

Tuesday, 8 September 2026

Note: The person to contact about the agenda and documents for this meeting is Lara Knight, Governance Services - Telephone: 024 7697 2692 E-mail: lara.knight@coventry.gov.uk

Membership: Councillors F Beechey, J Blundell, J Gardiner, A Kaur (Deputy Chair), M Lapsa, E M Reeves, H Rehman, E Ruane and R Singh (Chair)

By invitation Councillor G Duggins

Public Access

Any member of the public who would like to attend the meeting in person is encouraged to contact the officer below in advance of the meeting regarding arrangements for public attendance. A guide to attending public meeting can be found here: <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/publicAttendanceMeetings>

Lara Knight, Governance Services - Telephone: 024 7697 2692
E-mail: lara.knight@coventry.gov.uk

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee
held at 10.00 am on Wednesday, 26 August 2026

Present:

Members:

- Councillor R Singh (Chair)
- Councillor A Kaur (Deputy Chair)
- Councillor F Beechey
- Councillor J Gardiner
- Councillor S Gray (substitute for Councillor E M Reeves)
- Councillor M Heaven (substitute for Councillor J Blundell)
- Councillor S Jobbar (substitute for Councillor E Ruane)
- Councillor M Lapsa
- Councillor H Rehman

:

Non-Voting Members of the Committee:

- Councillor M Greenhalgh (substitute for Councillor S Gray)

Other Members:

- Councillor G Duggins (Cabinet Member for Policy and Leadership)
- Councillor D McCann
- Councillor J McNicholas (Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Cohesion)

Employees (by Service Area):

Law, Governance, and Safer Communities

- J Newman (Director), J Barnett, G Holmes, L Nagle, T Robinson

Planning and Performance

- C Boden-Haton (Director)

Others Present:

- Chief Inspector (West Midlands Police)

Apologies:

- Councillor J Blundell, E M Reeves and E Ruane

Public Business

7. Declarations of Interest

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests.

8. To agree the minutes of the previous meeting held on 24 June, 2026

The minutes of the meeting held on 26th June 2026, were agreed and signed as a true record.

There were no matters arising.

9. **Cabinet Member Portfolio Priorities 2026-27**

The Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee considered a Briefing Note of the Scrutiny Co-ordinator attached to which were two appendices outlining the priorities of the Cabinet Members which sit within the remit of the Committee.

One of Scrutiny's roles is to hold the Executive to account by reviewing decisions made by the Cabinet before they are implemented (pre-scrutiny) or after they are enacted. Therefore, the Committee has the responsibility of scrutinising the portfolios of the Cabinet Member for Policy and Leadership, Councillor G Duggins, and the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Cohesion, Councillor J McNicholas. Inputs and comments informed each scrutiny board's work programmes for the remainder of the year.

Each cabinet member outlined the information provided at Appendix 1 and 2 to the Briefing Note and welcomed the opportunity for scrutiny.

The Committee asked questions, received answers and made comments in respect of the following:

- Oversight of the budget.
- The process for appointing scrutiny chairs – statutory guidance relating to scrutiny appointments.
- The Council being more proactive in increasing pressure to shut down illegal premises and encouraging the public to not shop there.
- Increasing fly-tipping and methods used to tackle this:
 - Accessing a more data driven approach – more officer recruitment and the local community's involvement.
 - Increasing fines under caution to £1000 and pursuing surveillance campaigns like the Wall of Shame.
 - Efforts to tackle repeat offenders in problem areas.
 - Assessing whether the online booking system at the London Road Recycling and Disposal Centre had an impact on fly-tipping.
 - Waste education programs for adults and children – already an item on the work programme for the Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4).
- Improving neighbourhoods and the high-street:
 - Increasing publication of rogue premises licence holders and partnership working with local community activists.
 - Efforts made to lobby government over the length of closure orders and closure orders against individuals instead of premises – focusing on enforcement as disruption to illegal premises.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee ensures that enforcement issues be referred to the Committee in the future.

10. **One Coventry Plan Annual Performance Report (April 2025 - March 2026)**

The Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee considered a report of the Director of Strategy and Performance on the One Coventry Annual Performance between April 2025 to March 2026 attached as an appendix to the report.

The report stated that the One Coventry Plan sets out the Council's vision and priorities for the city to 2030. It provides the framework for how the Council works with partners and communities to improve outcomes, tackle inequalities, support economic prosperity and respond to climate change. Using performance indicators, trend data, benchmarking and case studies, the report provided an assessment of progress against the Plan's priorities to show both measurable outcomes and wider impact.

Specifically, performance was monitored against 88 indicators. Of these, 71 were assessed against the previous year. Overall, 44 of the 71 indicators, or 62%, either improved or stayed the same, while 27 declined. Progress could not be assessed for 17 indicators: 8 because current-year data was not yet available, 6 because there was insufficient prior-year data, mainly due to new indicators being introduced, and 3 because they were contextual indicators with no clear desired direction of travel.

Therefore, it was summarised that the overall performance picture was mixed, with more indicators improving or staying the same than declining. Stronger progress was evident in outcomes and inequalities, and in several climate-related measures. Economic performance was more challenging, with strengths in business survival, tourism, investment income and housing pipeline, but concerns remaining around unemployment, youth unemployment, skills inequalities, economic inactivity and city centre footfall.

Councillor G Duggins introduced the item and recognised the significance of the report since its introduction in the early 2010s.

The Committee asked questions, received answers and made comments in respect of the following:

- The readability of the report, ensuring that accessible font size and spacing was used, so that the report can be read both online and in hard copy.
- That an all-members seminar would be held where officers and Cabinet Members can be asked more detailed questions on performance.

The Committee also identified the following for referral to the appropriate scrutiny board:

- That fly-tipping, including the education programme and the Bring the Tip to You programme be considered by the Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4).
- That the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) consider the active travel performance as part of the item on the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.
- That the Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4) consider community involvement in Pride in Place.

RESOLVED that, the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee considers the Council's progress as set out in the performance report attached at Appendix 1 to the report and forwards the following recommendations to Cabinet:

- 1) Improve the layout and presentation of the report to make the information provided more accessible.
- 2) That performance measures are identified specifically for active travel, as part of an item to be considered by the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3).

11. City Centre Public Spaces Protection Order 2026

The Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee considered a report and presentation of the Director of Law, Governance, and Safer Communities on the City Centre Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) 2026.

The report outlined that a PSPO is a legal tool designed to address anti-social behaviour in specific public areas allowing local authorities to restrict or prohibit certain activities to improve community safety and quality of life. The City Centre PSPO has been in place for a number of years and remains an important tool in helping partners tackle anti-social behaviour and issues that impact on the quality of life of those using the city centre. The current Order covers a range of measures, including busking, cycling and behaviours that can cause nuisance, alarm or distress.

As the existing Order expires in November 2026, the report proposed a new City Centre PSPO for a further three-year period. The proposed Order retained a number of existing provisions whilst introducing updates to reflect current issues, consultation feedback and operational experience. As part of the development of the proposed replacement Order, a public consultation took place during June and July 2026 and generated 884 responses. Overall support for renewal of the PSPO was high, with 85% of respondents in favour, 8% not in favour and 7% unsure. Detailed consultation findings were set out in Appendix 3a of the report.

Following this consultation, a new City Centre PSPO was proposed for a further three-year period including the following:

- Prohibitions focused on conduct that causes harassment, alarm or distress.
- Provisions regulating the use of amplification equipment.
- Controls on temporary structures, including gazebos and stalls.
- Provisions relating to busking, cycling, e-bikes and e-scooters.

The officer's presentation outlined the following key areas:

- The process for renewal of the PSPO.
- Community engagement and the public consultation.
- Suggested actions of the Committee – e-bikes and e-scooters, scope of enforcement zone, evidence gathering, technical solutions, face coverings, suitable amplification, professional begging, public communication and signage, and temporary structures.
- Enforcement activity.

- Updates – new staff, increased hours, and a focus on reporting.

The Committee asked questions received answers and made comments in respect of the following:

- The requirement for a Temporary Event Notice for significant amplification.
- Safety measures in place for the visually impaired – conducting Equality Impact Assessments and receiving advice from the Disability Equality Advisory Panel.
- Defining reasonable exemptions regarding licences.
- E-bike and e-scooter riders who wear face coverings cycling dangerously:
 - Partnership working with Lime Bike to identify problem riders following incidents.
 - The issue of collecting data on face coverings, including police powers for stop and search and the criteria to do so.
 - Liaising with colleagues in Nuneaton and Bedworth to learn from their experiences of removal of face coverings as part of a PSPO.
 - The practicalities of additional consultation on the removal of face-coverings whilst riding e-bikes and e-scooters.
 - Dismounting data and how this was collected.
 - The role of community wardens in enforcing the PSPO with regards to riders and collecting more data.
 - Contacting ride and food delivery companies to tackle anti-social behaviour connected to e-bikes and e-scooters.
- Extending the enforcement zone to cover the Belgrade Theatre and Earl Street.
- The process for requesting licenses for amplification for events in the city centre, ensuring that it is a quick and easy.

RESOLVED that, the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommends that Cabinet:

- 1) Approves the new City Centre PSPO.**
- 2) Agrees an additional separate public consultation on the removal of face coverings while riding e-bikes and e-scooters.**
- 3) Includes the removal of face coverings as part of the consultation on the renewal of the city-wide PSPO renewal.**

12. Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee Work Programme and Outstanding Issues 2026/2027

The Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee considered a report of the Director of Law, Governance and Safer Communities, that provided information regarding the Committee's Work Programme and Outstanding Issues for 2026/27.

It was agreed that data collected regarding previous work programme items be shared with Committee members.

13. **Any Other Items of Public Business**

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 12.35 pm)

To: Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

Date: 16 September 2026

Subject: Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Review Letter 2025-26

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 The purpose of this note is to inform Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee of the content of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's (LGSCO) Annual Review letter 2025-26.
- 1.2 It is also to update the Committee with examples of the types of complaint that result in financial remedy payments being awarded by the LGSCO and their updated guidance as to how the level of redress is determined, as requested at the previous meeting.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee is recommended to:
 - 1) Note the content of the LGSCO's letter (Appendix 1 and 2)
 - 2) Note the examples of the complaints resulting in financial remedy payments being awarded by the LGSCO (Appendix 3) and the updated guidance as to how the level of redress is determined (Appendix 4)
 - 3) Consider a further item on the Council's annual Compliments, Comments and Complaints reports at the meeting of 13 January 2027

3 Information and Background

- 3.1 Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee have lead responsibility for complaints within the Council's governance arrangements to support a positive complaint handling culture, in accordance with the LGSCO's Complaint Handling Code (2024).
- 3.2 As such, Scrutiny receives regular information that provides insight on the Council's complaint handling performance, including the annual complaints performance and service improvement report, and the LGSCO's Annual Review letter.
- 3.3 The LGSCO's Annual Review letter is addressed to the Council's Chief Executive, Leader, and the Chair of Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee, and provides a statistical review of the Council's performance in respect of those complaints which

have exhausted the Council's complaints process and have been escalated to, investigated and decided by the Ombudsman. Details can be found here: [Coventry City Council - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#) and are reproduced as Appendix 2.

4 Health Inequalities Impact

- 4.1 All reports considered by scrutiny will be considered for their impact on health inequalities.

Appendix 1 – Annual Review letter 2025-26

Appendix 2 – Annual Review summary 2025-26

Appendix 3 – Examples of complaints resulting in financial remedy payments

Appendix 4 – Summary of LGSCO guidance for financial remedies

Adrian Le Cras
Service Recovery Manager
Customer Services
adrian.lecras@coventry.gov.uk

20 May 2026

By email

Dr Nugent
Chief Executive
Coventry City Council

Dear Dr Nugent

Annual Review letter 2025-26

I write to you with your annual summary of complaint statistics from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman for the year ending 31 March 2026.

We recognise that local authorities continue to face significant pressures in delivering services to their communities. We hope the data and insight we share with you each year remains a useful tool for reflection and continuous improvement. Please consider it as part of your corporate governance processes.

[Your annual statistics are available here.](#)

In addition, you can find the detail of the decisions we have made about your Council, read reports we have issued, and view the service improvements your Council has agreed to make as a result of our investigations, as well as previous annual review letters.

We will write to organisations in July where there is exceptional practice or where we have concerns about complaint handling. Not all organisations will get a letter. If you do receive a letter it will be sent in advance of its publication on our website on 15 July 2026.

Supporting complaint and service improvement

We remain committed to supporting the sector to embed effective systems of redress. Where authorities are navigating reorganisation and devolution, we are ready to help ensure that robust complaint handling is built into new arrangements from the outset. Please do get in touch if your organisation would benefit from our advice and guidance.

Our [Complaint Handling Code](#), in force since April 2025, is now applied in our casework and offers structure and support to your local complaint system. Our training programme provides a flexible, expert-led route to building complaints capability across your teams, with courses open for individual delegates to book. Contact training@lgo.org.uk for more information.

Our Annual Review of Local Government Complaints will be published in July 2026, setting out the national picture of complaints, trends across service areas, and emerging systemic issues. We encourage you to read it alongside your own organisation's data.

Yours sincerely,

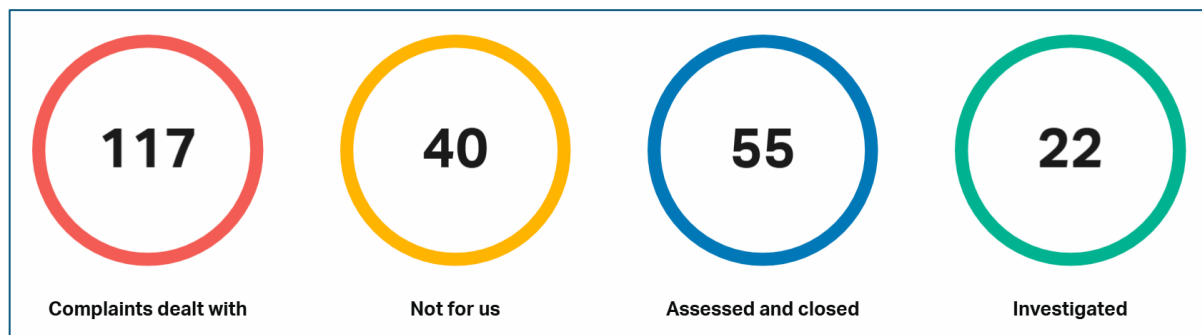
A. K. Clarke

Amerdeep Clarke
Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman
Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

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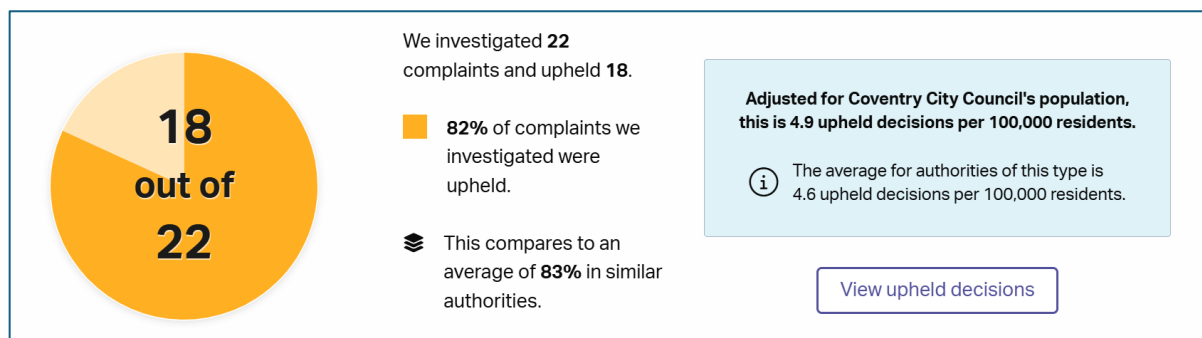
Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Review 2025-26 – Coventry City Council

Complaints Received



This compares with 101 complaints received by the LGSCO in 2024-25, of which 26 were referred back for the Council to investigate, 53 were assessed and closed following the LGSCO's initial enquiries, and 22 were investigated.

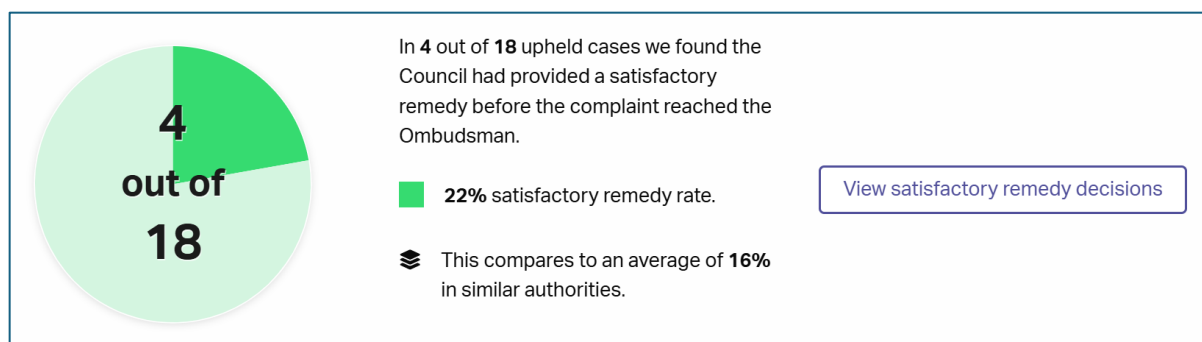
Complaints Upheld



This compares with 17 upheld out of 22 investigated, or 77%, in 2024-25.

[Decision results - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)

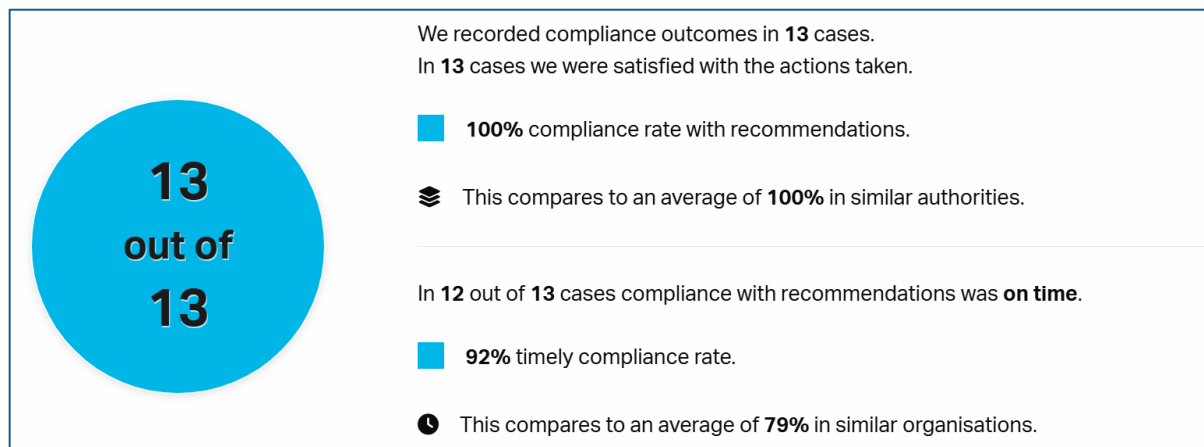
Satisfactory Remedies provided by the Council



This compares with 2 out of 17 where Coventry had provided a satisfactory remedy before the complaint reached the Ombudsman in 2024-25.

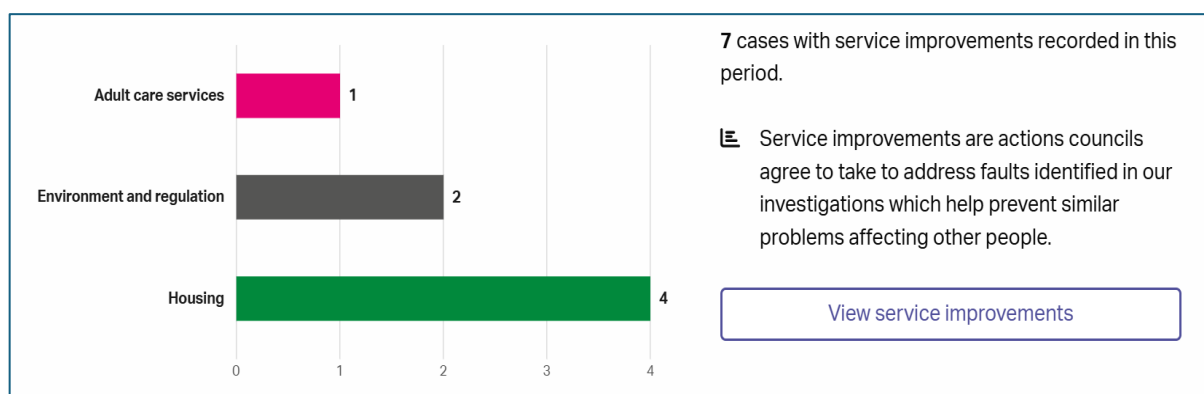
[Decision results - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)

Compliance with Ombudsman recommendations



This compares with 14 compliant out of 14 recommendations (100% compliance rate) in 2024-25.

Service improvements



7 cases with recorded service improvements is identical to that recorded for 2024-25, although the split between services was slightly different (2 x Adult Social Care; 1 x Childrens Social Care; 3 x Education; 1 x Housing)

[Service Improvement results - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)

Appendix 2 LGSCO prescribed financial remedies 2024-25

Service Area	Background and remedy	Monetary Settlement
LGSCO prescribed remedies		
Adult Social Care	1. The Council failed to carry out a social care assessment when Ms Y requested care and support as she was struggling to look after herself and her child due to illness. The assessment subsequently completed by adult social care in January 2023 was a contact assessment (not a full needs assessment) and did not consider Ms Y's caring responsibilities. As a consequence, Ms Y was without support when she was unwell, and this caused avoidable distress and a decline in her mental health. Remedies included: A symbolic payment of £250 to reflect the avoidable distress and to recognise the avoidable uncertainty around entitlement to support caused by the failures set out.	£250
	2. Ms X, complained on behalf of her mother (Mrs Y) and herself that the Council: - Failed to keep Mrs Y safe in an accommodation with an independent living provider it had commissioned, which resulted in her being groomed and assaulted. - Completed a flawed safeguarding investigation, caused delay in sharing the outcome with her, and did not share some information she asked for; and - Communicated with her poorly, which included not responding to some communication and a social worker making inappropriate comments. Ms X also said the independent living provider failed to respond to her complaint when it said it would and did not comply fully with the police investigation. Ms X said, as a result, she and Mrs Y experienced distress and uncertainty, and Mrs Y experienced harm or risk of harm. Remedies included: - Pay Mrs Y a symbolic payment of £250 to acknowledge failure to keep her safe from harm or risk of harm; - Pay Ms X a symbolic payment of £250 to acknowledge the preventable distress and uncertainty she experienced as a result of failure to keep Mrs Y safe from harm or risk of harm, and some delayed communication with her.	£500
	3. Ms X complained that the Council did not respond to her reports of concerning behaviour and violence from her son, Mr Y, made prior to his arrest, and did not provide the family any support. Ms X also complained the Council did not provide an emergency respite placement for Mr Y when he was due to be released from police custody. Mr Y's care provider found him a hotel, but Ms X said the Council left him at risk. Ms X said Mr Y's social worker did not understand the risks of Mr Y living at home. They also did not understand his	

Service Area	Background and remedy	Monetary Settlement
	communication needs and used long words, causing him distress. Ms X considers the Council let the family down and that Mr Y's arrest could have been avoided if the Council had acted on her reports. Remedies included: • Pay Mr Y and Ms X £250 each (£500 in total) in recognition of the uncertainty and distress caused by failure to follow up on respite care options and failure to properly consider suitable support when Mr Y's behaviour escalated.	£500
Education Services	4. Ms X complains the Council: • Did not provide adequate education to her daughter Y and the provision listed in her Education, Health and Care plan when she was out of school. • Delayed in issuing a final Education, Health and Care plan following an annual review. Ms X said her daughter has missed out on education and has fallen behind in her education. Remedies included: • Apologise to Ms X for not providing adequate education to Y or the special educational provision in her EHC plan and for the time taken to produce a final EHC plan following Y's annual review. • Pay Ms X £3,600, for the benefit of Y's education, to recognise the loss of education and special education provision to Y between February 2023 and March 2024. (This is calculated at being £1,200 a term for three terms). • Make an ongoing payment of £400 a month to Ms X. The Council should start this from April 2024 until either Y reintegrates back into school in accordance with her EHC plan, or the Council puts in place what it sees as an appropriate package of education alongside all parts of the special educational provision it is able to deliver while Y is not at school. • Pay Ms X £300 to recognise the distress and uncertainty she experienced as a result of the delays in issuing Y's final EHC plan following the annual review. 5. Ms X complained the Council failed to provide education for her child Y, who was medically signed off from school since January 2023. Ms X says Y had an Education and Health Care Plan which the Council failed to provide provision for when they were out of school. Ms X also complained the Council delayed in finalising Y's Education and Health Care Plan which delayed her right of appeal. Remedies included: • Provide an apology to Ms X and a pay her £300 for the distress and frustration caused through the Council's delays and handling of this matter. • Provide an apology and pay Ms X £2,625 to acknowledge the impact on Y of the lost educational provision from 15 February 2023 until 11 September 2023.	£3900 £2925

Service Area	Background and remedy	Monetary Settlement
	6. Mrs X complained the Council did not put alternative provision in place for her child Y, when Y became too unwell to attend school. Mrs X said this impacted on Y's quality of life and development and caused her and Y's father stress and difficulty. Remedies included: • Pay Mrs X £500 in recognition of her injustice.	£500
Children's Services	7. Ms X complains that in early February 2023 her son, Mr Y's social worker failed to: • tell her quickly her son was attacked and injured: and • get Mr Y to seek medical advice. Ms X said the Council did not consider her complaint properly. It relied on altered reports and investigated the wrong incident. It then refused to investigate her complaint at stage three of its procedure because it considered her behaviour towards staff unacceptable. Ms X would like the Council to apologise for its failings and support Mr Y as it should have done from the beginning. Ms X also complained in August 2023 that since September 2022 the Council failed to provide Mr Y with support he was entitled to under the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000, as well as raising other concerns, which were not investigated. Remedies included: • pay Ms X £300 it offered to remedy the distress, frustration and unnecessary time and trouble she experienced; • pay an additional £150 to Ms X for the avoidable uncertainty the delay in investigating her complaint from August 2023 has caused her. 8. Ms X complained about a social worker's judgement and a section 7 report prepared for court action, which she considered was inaccurate and about which the judge was critical. She also complained about the way the Council handled the child in need process and said her child, Y, should have had a child protection plan from 2022. Ms X said the Council's failings meant she incurred additional legal costs and was unable to claim Legal Aid. She also said she was caused distress and uncertainty and was put to avoidable time and trouble pursuing the Council. Remedies included: • The Council agreed to pay £800.	£450 £800

Service Area	Background and remedy	Monetary Settlement
	9. Ms X complained about the actions of the Council's children's services. The Council accepted her complaint under the children's statutory complaints procedure but had not completed the stage two investigation within the required timescales. Remedies included: - The Council will pay Ms X a financial remedy for the distress caused by the delay, calculated at £50 per month of delay, from 20 May 2024 to the date Ms X is sent the stage 2 adjudication letter. 10. Mr X complained about the actions of a children's social worker. The Council accepted his complaint under the children's statutory complaints procedure but has not completed the stage two investigation within the required timescales. Remedies included: - The Council will complete its stage two investigation and will pay Mr X a financial remedy for the distress caused by the delay. This should be calculated at £50 per month of delay, from 11 May 2024 to the date Mr X is sent the stage 2 adjudication letter.	£350 £250
Housing	11. Mr X complained that the Council continued to auto-bid for properties advertised on Coventry Homefinder which are unsuitable for his housing needs. As a result, he was not considered for other properties which would have been suitable. He says this caused him stress and had a detrimental impact on his mental health. He would like the Council to apologise and pay a financial remedy. Remedies included: Pay £300 as a symbolic payment to recognise the distress caused by its fault.	£300
Corporate and Other Services	12. Ms X complained the Council wrongly declined her Blue Badge application for her son. Ms X said this has affected her and her son, as he needs a Blue Badge so they can get to the car quickly if he is having a seizure. Remedies included: Apologise to Ms X and pay Ms X £150 to recognise the uncertainty and missed opportunity caused by the fault in this case.	£150
Total		£10,875

Symbolic payments and financial remedies – LGSCO guidance November 2025 (summarised)

When someone has suffered an injustice where the Council has been at fault, any remedy offered should reflect the impact on the customer from the failures identified. The aim is to put the customer back in the position they would have been in, had the service failure(s) not occurred.

Where that remedy takes the form of a payment, it is intended to be largely symbolic rather than compensatory, but one that recognises and acknowledges that the complainant had legitimate cause to make their complaint.

When considering making financial remedies, the Council should take into account:

- Whether any quantifiable losses have been incurred
- Significant distress or inconvenience caused
- Harm, or the risk of harm
- The time and trouble a customer has experienced
- The Guidance on Remedies issued by the Ombudsman [Guidance on remedies - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#)

In doing so we should consider what is an appropriate remedy for the injustice experienced. Neither the Ombudsman's guidance nor their suggested remedy ranges are intended to be prescriptive, and discretion is required on a case-by-case basis to decide what is fair and reasonable in the circumstances of each situation.

Quantifiable financial impact

We should consider whether there has been an actual, evidenced financial loss incurred as a direct result of the failings we have identified in our investigation.

Examples may include:

- Where a complainant has paid for a service they have not received, or which has not been delivered to an acceptable standard.

This can be remedied by refunding all or part of the amount paid. The level of refund will likely reflect the difference between the service provided and the service paid for.

- Where a complainant has had to pay for a service privately that they would not have needed to, if it were not for the Council's fault.

This can be remedied by a straightforward reimbursement. However, we should carefully consider whether such arrangements were wholly necessary and only reimburse the avoidable financial impact of the fault.

- Where a complainant may have been without services during the period of fault, for example care services, which would have been bought using direct payments.

The remedy for this depends on the level of injustice, harm or distress caused by not having these services. This may amount to more than the value of the direct payments, for example: if a particularly vulnerable complainant had critical needs and no alternative support. However, it may amount to less, if the needs were met by friends and family (although they may have their own, separate injustices as a result of having to 'step in' to provide unpaid care, having lost earnings or used up holiday to do so).

- Where a complainant has had to meet costs which would have been covered by a payment from the organisation, by cutting back elsewhere, which should not have been necessary.

This is particularly likely to be the case where the money owed was an allowance for looking after a child. Further advice on this type of remedy is given in the LGSCO subject guidance on Education and Children's services complaints (part 5).

- Where a complainant has had to pay other costs or fees that they would not have needed to, were it not for the Council's fault.

Examples might include paying for things such as court costs or enforcement agents / bailiff fees; costs incurred where the complainant could not use a vehicle that had been incorrectly immobilised; the reasonable cost of transport that the Council was obliged to provide but failed to do so; or the costs of tuition or educational materials where parents have sourced these due to no or unsuitable alternative provision being in place.

In such cases, we should consider whether to reimburse the customer for all or part of the amount paid, assessing whether such payments were wholly necessary and whether it was reasonable for the customer to incur any or all of the costs, with any remedy focused on the avoidable financial impact of the fault.

Symbolic financial impact

If there is still a significant outstanding injustice, or it has not been possible to put the person back in the position they would have been in, the Council should consider whether a symbolic payment may be appropriate.

Symbolic payments are usually made to remedy injustice in the form of significant distress, harm or the risk of harm, and / or excessive time and trouble experienced in pursuing a complaint. The payment offered does not reflect a definitive loss, as

this cannot be quantified, but rather it is a recognition of the overall distress and inconvenience caused to the customer by the circumstances of the complaint.

Significant distress and inconvenience

‘Distress’ can include:

- Stress, anxiety, worry, frustration, and uncertainty caused by a particular service failure
- Raised expectations: where the Council’s actions or inactions led the complainant to (wrongly, but reasonably) believe that certain actions or benefits would, or would not, follow
- Lost opportunity: where the complainant was deprived of an opportunity to take action or influence events, and it is likely the final outcome would have been different but for this omission; and
- Undue significant stress, inconvenience and frustration.

‘Distress’ must reflect more than just simple inconvenience or moderate disappointment with any flawed actions or inactions; it must be **avoidable** distress arising from fault by the council, where the injustice is sufficiently significant to warrant a symbolic payment in remedy. As such, not every instance of ‘raised expectations’ or ‘uncertainty’ will justify a payment.

Any proposed remedy should take account of all the circumstances including:

- the severity of the distress
- the length of time involved
- the number of people affected (for example, members of the complainant’s family or household as well as the complainant)
- any disabilities or vulnerabilities of the customer or household
- any other relevant factors, such as relevant professional opinion about the effects on any individual

The LGSCO will normally recommend a remedy payment for distress of **up to £500**, but does provide service-specific recommendations as illustrated in Appendix B.

In cases where the distress is especially severe or prolonged, or where the complainant is particularly vulnerable, a higher remedy payment may be appropriate.

Harm or the risk of harm

Harm, or risk of harm, is where the fault caused, or risked causing, physical injury, material damage, or ill or adverse effects, including mental harm, on the person(s) affected. It can also arise when the customer did not receive services intended to provide protection or support because of fault by the Council.

Harm, or risk of harm, needs to be considered in the same way as avoidable distress. In situations where fault by the Council exposed the customer to the risk of harm (rather than actual harm) the LGSCO recommends a remedy of **up to £1,000** as an appropriate acknowledgement of the impact on them. If the risk was particularly severe, or actual harm occurred, which lasted for a long period of time, a higher remedy payment may be appropriate.

Time and trouble (because of flaws in complaint handling)

Inevitably there will be a certain amount of time, trouble and minor costs (such as phone calls or postage) associated with making a complaint.

Usually a time-and-trouble remedy would only be considered where there has been fault or injustice in the way the Council considered the complaint, for example, where it:

- unreasonably failed to progress a complaint / taking far more time to respond than would be considered usual
- failed to escalate a complaint on repeated occasions
- failed to respond to reasonable contacts from the customer
- demonstrated overall poor or unreasonable handling of the complaint

The LGSCO recommends that any payment for time and trouble could be **up to £500**, depending on the severity of the injustice. This payment should be adjusted to reflect the degree of extra difficulty experienced by the customer and any factors which make the complainant vulnerable. They also recommend payment of **£50 per month** for frustration caused by avoidable delay.

Mitigating circumstances

When assessing remedies, we should also consider whether the customer's own actions (or inactions), or those of any other relevant party, might have contributed to the situation in which they found themselves and exacerbated or failed to minimise the impact.

For example, a delay on the customer's part in returning an application form, notifying the relevant service of a problem, providing information requested by the Council, or the complainant's unreasonable behaviour may have caused delays dealing with a complaint.

These factors may have lessened (mitigated) the injustice caused and justify a lower remedy payment being offered.

Appendix A – Subject specific remedies guidance

The [Guidance on remedies - Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman](#) includes a range of subject specific remedies guidance, including:

Part 3) - Adult Social Care

- Assessment of need
- Care and support plans and provision of care
- Charging
- Mental capacity
- Personalisation and direct payments
- Adult safeguarding

Part 4) - Benefits and Taxation

Part 5) - Children and Education

- Adoption and fostering
- Kinship carers and special guardianship
- Looked After Children and Young People leaving care
- Child protection
- Statutory Children's complaints procedure
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- School admissions and appeals
- School transport
- Education out of school / Alternative provision

Part 6) - Environment and Regulation services

- Antisocial behaviour (ASB)
- Statutory nuisance
- Refuse collection and recycling
- Cemeteries and crematoria
- Hackney carriage and private taxi hire

Part 7) - Housing and Homelessness

Part 8) - Planning

Part 9) - Highways and Transport

Part 10) - Other remedy examples

- Land
- Leisure and culture
- Public health
- Standards committee
- Other

Appendix B – Subject specific distress remedies guidance

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Service Area	Recommended Remedy	Fault	Circumstances
ASB nuisance	£100 to £500 a month	Avoidable Distress (Loss of amenity)	Where delay or inaction by the council has caused a demonstrable impact on a complainant's quality of life, taking account of the severity of the loss and the circumstances of the complainant
Statutory nuisance	£200 to £500 a month	Avoidable Distress (Loss of amenity)	Where, on the balance of probabilities, a properly conducted investigation would have led to action to address the nuisance sooner, we will usually recommend a symbolic payment for loss of amenity, taking account of the severity of the loss and the circumstances of the complainant
Homelessness	£150 to £350 a month	Avoidable Distress	Complainant has been deprived of suitable accommodation due to council being at fault at what would inevitably have been a stressful period in their life
Homelessness	£300 to £1000 a month	Avoidable Distress	Complainant had no option, because of fault by the council, but to sleep rough (for example, sleeping in the open air, a tent or car) for a period
Homelessness	£100 to £200 a week	Avoidable Distress	Households staying in unsuitable Bed & Breakfast accommodation more than the six-week legal limit for families with children or a pregnant household member. This remedy should be in addition to reimbursement of any specific quantifiable costs that the homeless household incurred
Housing Allocations	£150 to £350 a month	Avoidable Distress	Where a complainant has had to remain in unsuitable accommodation because of fault in the housing allocation process. The remedy should be based on the impact on the complainant and other household members
Housing Adaptations	£150 to £350 a month	Avoidable Distress	Complainant deprived of adaptations which would have increased their independence and improved their daily life. Remedy should be based on the impact on the complainant or other persons affected and any carers i.e. a remedy for a delay in installing a handrail is likely to be at the lower end of the range, while the impact of a delay in providing accessible bathing facilities is likely to fall at the upper end of the range
Recovery or enforcement	Up to £500	Avoidable Distress	Avoidable distress associated with unnecessary recovery or bailiff action
Planning	£100 to £500 a month	Avoidable Distress (Loss of amenity)	Where a loss of amenity is temporary (for example, pending remedial or enforcement action) and until a permanent solution is found and established. The remedy should take account of the severity of the loss and the circumstances of the complainant.
Education	£900 - £2,400 per term	Loss of educational provision	Injustice caused to the child from missing educational provision, as well as reflecting the normal range of consequential injustice also caused to the family due to this fault, for example; where there are significant additional caring responsibilities that occur from a child being out of education, and avoidable disruption to daily routine

Briefing note

To: Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

Date: 16th September 2026

Subject: Customer Communication and Service Standards

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 To establish a task and finish group (T&F) to consider how residents experience Council services when reporting issues and whether service expectations and communications are clear, consistent and joined up across the organisation.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee are recommended to:
 - 1) Establish a task and finish group to consider Customer Communication and Service Standards (Scoping document can be found in Appendix 1)
 - 2) Identify Members to take part in the task and finish group

3 Information/Background

- 3.1 The proposed task and finish group will consider how residents experience Council services when reporting issues, and whether service expectations and communications are clear, consistent and joined up across the organisation.
- 3.2 Members have previously highlighted that residents are often less concerned with how services are organised internally and more focused on understanding what will happen after a report is made, how long it is expected to take, and how they will be kept informed throughout the process.
- 3.3 The group will receive updates on reporting and communication processes across a representative sample of a cross-section of Council Services.
- 3.4 Officers will outline how residents currently report issues, how information is recorded and tracked, how updates are provided, and how far response times, service standards and expectations are communicated to residents.
- 3.5 Members will consider examples of good practice already in place, including automated updates and reporting systems, as well as challenges arising from the use of different systems and reporting routes across services.
- 3.6 The discussion will also involve relevant colleagues responsible for transformation, performance and systems integration, to provide an overview of how reporting and communication systems operate across the Council and how they connect internally.

- 3.7 The task and finish group will explore opportunities to improve consistency, strengthen communication with residents, support the One Coventry approach and identify whether technology, automation and improved system integration could help provide a clearer and more standardised customer journey across service areas.
- 3.8 Key lines of enquiry will include how residents currently report issues; how expectations around response times and service standards are communicated; how residents receive progress updates and confirmation when action has been completed; how different Council systems interact; and what opportunities there are to improve consistency, transparency and customer confidence across services.

Appendix 1: Draft scoping document

Elan Jones
Scrutiny Co-ordinator
Law, Governance and Safer Communities
elan.jones@coventry.gov.uk

Scrutiny Scoping Document

Title of Review topic	
Customer Communication and Service Standards Task and Finish Group	
Objectives	
What does the Board/Task and Finish Group hope to achieve by considering the topic? What are the issues the T&F are hoping to address	Review how residents report issues, receive updates and understand service standards across Council services relating to waste services, highways, anti-social behaviour / community safety; identify opportunities to improve consistency, communication, automation and customer experience.
What will be the indicators of success?	Success will be demonstrated through the development of clear, well-informed recommendations to the relevant Cabinet Members. These recommendations will aim to improve consistency of customer communications, feedback loops, service standards and system integration; clearer customer journey identified.
When will the review be evaluated?	Following implementation of recommendations and future scrutiny monitoring
What will be included in the scope of the review?	Resident reporting processes relating to a representative sample of a cross-section of Council Services. To include: communication of service expectations; progress updates and closure notifications; systems integration, automation and customer feedback.
What will be excluded from the scope?	Detailed operational performance of individual services; service performance matters not directly related to customer communication. Services not identified as part of the Task & Finish Group.
Does the review link with any existing strategies or policies? Is this currently being reviewed/refreshed?	The review aligns with a range of strategies/policies to include: • One Coventry Plan • Compliments, Comments and Complaints policy • Customer service and digital transformation • Performance management framework and systems integration
Methodology	
How will the review be carried out? e.g. surveys, site visits, select committees etc.	The review will be delivered through a combination of: • Evidence sessions with waste services, highways, anti-social behaviour /

	community safety service areas, transformation and customer services officers; • Review current process mapping; • Review of communication journeys, reporting systems and examples of good practice. Key lines of enquiry: • How residents currently report issues across the three service areas. • How expectations regarding response times and service standards are communicated. • How residents receive progress updates and confirmation when actions have been completed. • Examples of effective communication and automated feedback currently in place. • How different Council systems and reporting mechanisms interact. • Opportunities to improve consistency, transparency and customer confidence through greater alignment of processes and communications across services.
Barriers and Risks	
What are the barriers and risks to the review? Any ethical considerations?	The review covers wide cross-cutting themes and involves several service areas. A key risk will be getting availability from the various teams and officers needed to provide evidence, which could affect timescales. There is also a risk that the review becomes too broad, given the range of services and systems involved. Other barriers may include inconsistent data, different reporting processes across services, limited system integration, and the need to manage expectations about what can realistically be changed. Ethical considerations include ensuring that any resident feedback or case examples are anonymised, handled sensitively, and used only to understand themes rather than focus on individual complaints or service failures.
How can these be managed/overcome?	These risks can be managed by keeping the scope focused on a small number of agreed service areas and using clear lines of enquiry for each session. Early engagement with relevant officers will help secure availability and agree realistic timescales. Evidence should focus on themes, customer journeys

	and examples of good practice rather than individual cases. Any resident feedback or case studies should be anonymised and handled sensitively. The group should also be clear about what is within its influence, recognising that some improvements may require longer-term system changes or wider service transformation.
Equality and Diversity	
Does the review have any potential implications for Equality and Diversity?	Potential positive impact through more accessible, consistent and transparent communication for residents.
Timescales and reporting procedure	
List any key dates/events which might impact on the timescales of the review	N/A
Anticipated number of meetings	2-4 meetings (indicative).
Scrutiny Board portfolio	Scruto
Cabinet Member portfolio	Strategic Finance & Resources plus others
Anticipated reporting date to Scrutiny Board	7/04/2027
Anticipated reporting route – Cabinet Member/Cabinet	
Report of.....	
Comms involvement	
Task and Finish Group Members	

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Please see page 2 onwards for background to items

24 June 2026
Scrutiny Annual Report 25/26 Scruco Work Programme 2026-27
26 August 2026
Cabinet Member Priorities City Centre PSPO (Cabinet Report) One Coventry Plan – a) Annual Performance Report (Cabinet Report) b) One Coventry Plan KPI's recommendations progress report
16 September 2026
Local Ombudsman Complaints Report Customer Communication and Service Standards
7 October 2026
12 November 2026
Child Poverty - Systemic Approach Shareholder Committee Reports
16 December 2026 13 January 2027 10 February 2027 11 March 2027 7 April 2027 2026-27
Domestic Abuse Climate Change Offender Management WMCA Integrated Settlement Sherbourne Recycling Plant – possible visit AI - Progress Off-line Support for Residents The Coventry Skills and Employment Board PSPO reviews – 2027-28 Communications Reputation and Insight Change (Transformation) Programme update Youth Justice Enforcement of Trading Standards – Protecting Communities

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
24 June 2026	Scrutiny Annual Report 25/26	To agree the scrutiny annual report for 2025-26 for presentation to Council		Scrutiny Coordinator
	Scruco Work Programme 2026-27	To consider items for the work programme for coming municipal year		
26 August 2026	Cabinet Member Priorities	Written Briefing Note of priorities to be circulated to the Board ahead of the meeting		
	City Centre PSPO (Cabinet Report)	To consider the Cabinet Report with the renewal of the City Centre PSPO plus additional prohibitions.	Community Safety and Cohesion – Cllr McNicholas	Davina Blackburn
	One Coventry Plan – a) Annual Performance Report (Cabinet Report) b) One Coventry Plan KPI's recommendations progress report	The Annual Performance report. To not only review performance in the One Coventry Plan but to delegate KPI's to all scrutiny boards for consideration. To review the recommendations raised during the Scruco Deep dive in 2025 that was agreed by Cabinet. Also to consider progress on identifying KPI's in other strategies/documents such as the CIPFA Code and aligning them.	Policy and Leadership – Cllr Duggins	Sunairah Miraj, C Boden-Haton
16 September 2026	Local Ombudsman Complaints Report	Following from the previous meeting - Officers to provide case studies outlining the types of complaints that result in financial remedy payments, including real examples (appropriately anonymised) that illustrate why a payment was made and how the level of redress was determined. Also the national guidance as reference.	Policy and Leadership – Cllr Duggins	Adrian LeCras
	Customer Communication and Service Standards	To establish a task and finish group to look at Customer Communication and Service Standards	Strategic Finance and Resources plus others	Clare Boden-Hatton
7 October 2026				

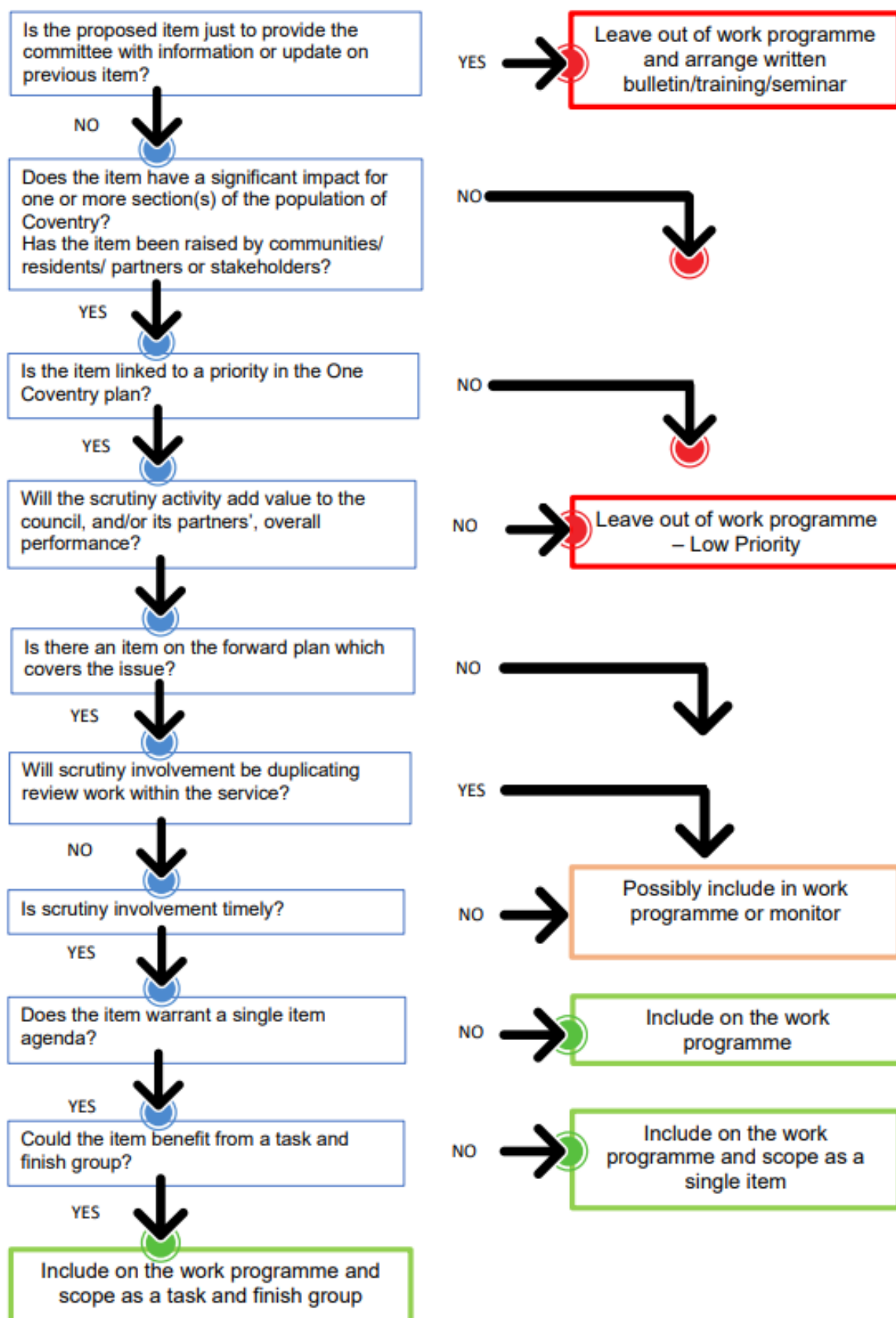
Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
12 November 2026	Child Poverty - Systemic Approach	To undertake a piece of work on the systemic approach to child poverty, ensuring cross-partner collaboration and consideration of generational worklessness and private sector involvement. Recommended as part of the OCP Deep Dive sessions. Links with the Marmot City framework and One Coventry Programme	Children & YP	S Sen, A Duggal
	Shareholder Committee Reports	To consider the reports ahead of the Shareholder Committee	Shareholder Committee	
16 December 2026				
13 January 2027				
10 February 2027				
11 March 2027				
7 April 2027				

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
2026-27	Domestic Abuse	A regular update item on the progress of delivery on the Domestic Violence and Abuse Strategy – to include government policy and funding announcement	CM – Community Safety and Cohesion	J Ross
	Climate Change	To consider what the Council is doing to protect the city from the impact of climate change, including partners involved in the delivery and represented on the Climate Change Board, including Resilience and Adaptation, SEP and flood risk by ward. EV Charging points accessibility.	CM - Jobs Regen & Climate Change	Colin Knight Rhian Palmer Bret Willers
	Offender Management	Following an item on Local Policing Update at their meeting 21 st February 24 the committee agreed to consider a further item on Offender Management	CM - Community Safety and Cohesion	Davina Blackburn
	WMCA Integrated Settlement	To look in more detail at the work that will be delivered though the integrated settlement from the devolution deal	CM - Policy & Leadership	Kim Mawby
	Sherbourne Recycling Plant – possible visit	To scrutinise the delivery of the recycling plant, as majority shareholders.	CM - City Services	Mark Adams
	AI - Progress	A progress update on recommendations made at the meeting on 6 March 2025	CM - Strat Finance & Resources/ City Services	Paul Ward
	Off-line Support for Residents	Following an item at the meeting in April 2026, the board requested any Cabinet Report was considered by scruco as part of that process	CM – Adult Services	Paul Ward Laura Waller
	The Coventry Skills and Employment Board	Following a meeting with SB3 on the Progress Made Against Coventry Economic Development and Skills Strategies and Coventry & Warwickshire Economic Plan on 26 th November 25	CM - Education & Skills	Steve Weir

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
	PSPO reviews – 2027-28	To be considered by scrutiny as part of the 3-year review A further update on the on the actions taken in relation to the City Centre Public Spaces Protection Order be submitted to the Committee in 6-months' time (May/June 2026) – including alternative routes for e-bike food deliveries	CM - Community Safety and Cohesion	Davina Blackburn
	Communications Reputation and Insight	To provide progress on issues raised at the meeting on 25 September 2025 – • Standardising community engagement across the council • Update on policy and public affairs • Review of the Council's website • Digital Exclusion Policy	CM - Policy & Leadership	C Holloway C Boden-Hatton
	Change (Transformation) Programme update	An update on progress following the item in November 2025	CM - Strat Finance & Resources	C Boden-Hatton
	Youth Justice	A scrutiny session with the police and relevant partners to examine the impact of changes in police approach to knife crime, including the effectiveness of criminalisation versus diversion and early intervention, and invite Simon Foster (PCC) to attend. As part of the OCP Deep Dive sessions to better understand police investigation and prosecution policies. To bring police representatives session to discuss decision-making processes, trends in types of offences, and reoffending rates. To include more detailed data on offence types and outcomes.	CM - Community Safety and Cohesion	PCC Simon Foster S Sen C Heeley

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer
	Enforcement of Trading Standards – Protecting Communities	To look in more detail at how illegal activity and the high street is addressed across the city	CM - Community Safety and Cohesion	Davina Blackburn

Work Programme Decision Flow Chart



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